(c) and (d) : The work of execution of this project has been awarded to M/s CMC Ltd. (CMC), a public sector undertaking on a turn-key basis. The capital cost of the system is about Rs. 6.0 crores and the operational cost per year would be about Rs. 1.5 crores. CIL would be making payment to the CMC in Indian Currency and no foreign exchange payment is involved from CIL to CMC.

Opencast mining in the coalfields of Upper Assam

1992. SHRI BHADRESHWAR GOHAIN : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have allowed opencast mining in the coalfields of Upper Assam;

(b) whether Government are aware that due to the large scale opencast mining, the nearby areas are badly affected and the adjoining paddy fields are completely damaged by the waste of the minings; and

(c) what is the reason to allow opencast mining in Assam in spite of vehement protest by the people ?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S. B. NYAMAGOUDA) : (a) to (c) The issue of environmental degradation caused by opencast mining has been earlier brought to the notice of the Central Government by various distinguished persons, organisations and Govt. of Assam. The Ministry of Environment & Forests had constituted an Expert Committee in 1988 to look into the environmental problems arising out of coal mining operations by CIL. On the basis of the recommendations of the Expert Committee the Govt. decided to stop opencast mining at Tikak. The various protection measures undertaken at Tikak OC are monitored by CIL, Govt. and the Assam Pollution Control Board. The Govt. of Assam have expressed satisfaction with the environmental protection measures undertaken at Tikak.

Opencast coal mining in Upper Assam is being undertaken within the mining lease hold. CIL is committed to ensure environmental compatible mining operations. Therefore they have undertaken major restoration and reclamation programme of the areas like construction of dams, toe walls, gully plugging, bamboo barricades, backfilling of the voids, top soil spreading and afforestation etc. These steps are also monitored by the Pollution Control Board of Assam who are satisfied with the progress achieved.

Payment of Interest on CMPF Contribution

1993. SHRI SUNIL BASU RAY : Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state :

(a) what is the procedure of payment of interest on CMPF contribution being collected from the employees and their employers every month;

(b) whether it is fact that CMPF authorities do not pay interest on the basis of every month subscription of employee and employer;

(c) if so, what is the reason therefore whereas other financial organisations are making payment on monthly basis; and

(d) what steps Government are going to take to save the CMPF members from this financial loss ?

THE DEPUY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRI S. B. NYAMAGOUDA) : (a) and (b) The procedure for payment of interest on the amount at the credit of a member of the Fund is prescribed under Rule 61 (2) of the Coal Mines Provident Fund Scheme which has been framed under Section 3 of the Coal Mines Provident Fund and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1948. According to the procedure prescribed, the interest is calculated on the opening balance at the credit of a member on the conclusion of the previous currency period. The currency period constitutes the one year period with effect from 1st April to 31st March of the following year. In other words, the interest is calculated on and annual basis and not on a monthly basis.

(c) As stated above in respect to (a) & (b) interest is being paid according to the Rules on the subject. The organisation's ability to pay interest to its members depends upon the interest earned by it on the Coal Mines Provident Fund. This